

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present preliminary amendment, claims 56-69 and 76-84 are pending in the application.

Claims 56-69 and 76-78 were allowed in the Notice of Allowance mailed on July 8, 2003, in this application.

New claim 84 is submitted herein.

Claims 79-83 were submitted as new claims in the application in an "Amendment Prior to First Action" filed on June 3, 2003, subsequent to the filing of the RCE filed on March 19, 2003 but prior to the mailing date of the Notice of Allowance mailed on July 8, 2003. These new claims were not acknowledged in the Notice of Allowance mailed on July 8, 2003.

Previously Submitted Supplemental IDSs

Three Supplemental Information Disclosure Statements were filed in the application, respectively on June 5, 2003 (citing 22 references); on June 11, 2003, (citing one reference); and on June 27, 2003 (citing 5 references), subsequent to the filing of the RCE filed on March 19, 2003 but prior to the mailing date of the Notice of Allowance mailed on July 8, 2003. None of these three supplemental IDSs were acknowledged in the Notice of Allowance mailed on July 8, 2003. **If these papers are not in the PTO application file, Applicants request the Examiner to contact the undersigned attorney so that copies can be submitted, together with appropriate proof of filing.** The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the references cited in these IDSs and to provide Applicants with an initialed copy of the forms PTO-1449 submitted therewith indicating such consideration.

The Present RCE

The present Preliminary Amendment is filed together with a further RCE and a further Supplemental IDS. The RCE is filed primarily to submit the present Supplemental IDS, as well as to submit the new claim 84 and to obtain an indication that claims 79-83 are also in the application. The IDS includes a total of 53 references not believed to be previously of record in this application. The Examiner is respectfully

requested to consider the references cited in this IDS and to provide Applicants with an initialed copy of the form PTO-1449 submitted therewith indicating such consideration.

In view of the previously acknowledged patentability of the claims pending in the application, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider the references cited in the previously submitted Supplemental IDSs and in the Supplemental IDS filed herewith, and to indicate the allowability of the claims thereover.

The Claims

Claims 56-69 and 76-83 were previously pending in this application. However, as noted above, claims 79-83 were not acknowledged in the Notice of Allowance mailed July 8, 2003. These claims are indicated as

Claim 84 has been added to the application in the present Preliminary Amendment. Support for the new claim 84 is found, for example, in original claim 64. The Examiner is requested to enter the new claim.

CONCLUSION

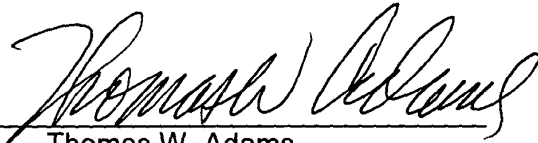
Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims 56-69 and 76-84 now in the application are allowable over the prior art. An early action indicating allowance all of the claims in this application is solicited.

In the event issues arise as a result of the filing of this paper, or remain in the prosecution of this application, Applicants request that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney to expedite allowance of the application. Should a Petition for Extension of Time be necessary for the present Reply to the outstanding Office action to be timely filed (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary) petition therefor is hereby made and, if any additional fees are required for the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account #18-0988, Docket No. AVERP2720US.

Respectfully submitted,

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